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A PERFECT TREASURE.

CHAPTER I.—HERSHELL POINT.

Most unfortunate persons are able to date their ruin from some trifling circumstance. The 'lifer'-convict, sentenced to years of seclusion till he gets his ticket of leave—looks back with regret on his first robbery with violence, laments the day when he stole his first watch, which perhaps was, after all, only that called a hunting one (on account of its fatal facility for 'running down'). If the poor fellow had but resisted the temptation to become its possessor, he might have sat on the bench (open to every British subject born with good lungs), instead of standing in the dock. Similarly, the wife of the French billiard-marker, once the flower of an English middle-class household, bewails that moment of indiscretion when she first returned from her finger-tips the clandestine salute of the self-styled Marquis de St Antoine, who lodged in the opposite second floor at Margate.

But why multiply examples? In every walk of life the fall can be traced to the first false step. I date my own condemnation to the literary profession from the day when I posted those *Lines to —*, to the editor of the *Sandiford Mercury*, and he yielded to my importunity at last (for I had sent him many a poem before), and published them. All young poets write *To —*, and all young prose-writers lay the scene of their stories 'not a hundred miles from L—'; whether from motives of delicacy, or because they have no superfluous imagination to spare for the invention of names, I am unable, at this distance of time, to recollect; but the practice, I now feel, detracts from the interest of their stories. One cannot feel very much wrapped up in either people or places who can only boast of an initial letter, such as the 'M or N' in the Baptismal Service.

Let me then here avoid that youthful error. My name and direction in full, at the period of which I write, was Marmaduke Drake, Esq., of Hershell Point, Hampshire; but I was not often addressed by that title, by reason of my tender years. I was

more commonly called Master Marmaduke, and even Master Marmy, though this latter I resented as a liberty. Sangaree Tannajee, my uncle's Hindu servant (a most important person in this history), was one of those who invariably called me 'Master Marmy;' and in revenge I called him Sambo. Whether I devised this term of reproach by some subtle process, such as is used by commentators, out of the word Sangaree, which was his 'front' name, or whether, dividing all mankind into two races, black and white, I dubbed him a nigger, I cannot recall to mind; but I know it made Sangaree Tannajee exceedingly angry to be called 'Sambo,' and that I often did it. I hated that Hindu with an intensity only known to boyhood, a period of life which resents difference of colour, of opinion, and even of taste, with ludicrous violence; and it is the fixed opinion of my riper years, that he, on his part, would have derived considerable pleasure from chopping off one by one all my fingers and toes, or roasting my juvenile carcass before a tardy fire. On the other hand, perhaps my imagination may have given his character a few uncharitable touches, inasmuch as he was my model ruffian, the lay-figure whom, in my youthful compositions, I invested with all the passions that defile the human breast: he was my 'Mongol of the Red Hand,' likewise my 'Gory Bandit of the Apennines,' which had appropriate scenery, borrowed from the really romantic features of the neighbourhood of Hershell Point. But for him there would have been no such creation as 'Wildred the Half-caste,' a supposed convert to the principles of the Church of England, but who only used them the better to conceal his designs against the family of R—, residing unsuspectingly in Bengal, but eventually massacred by the natives to the slow music of tom-toms. I mention these works because they are novelties: they were composed between my ninth and my sixteenth year, and have never emerged from the modest retirement of a somewhat illegible

manuscript. If any publisher, having effected his escape from Hanwell, should have undertaken to put forth the last-named romance, it would have occupied seven volumes quarto, and close printing too. Time was no object, at that period, with so much of it before me, and I did not spare my Uncle Braydon's letter-paper.

Perhaps a few words here regarding my uncle and guardian, as well as proprietor of the house and grounds called Hershell Point, would be only respectful, and cannot be considered out of place. I was an orphan, and entirely dependent upon his generosity, which was great, nay, beyond his means. It seems to me that there are no such uncles now-a-days. In our childhood, the world appears to be composed of parents, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, a great many cousins, and a few other people. It takes many years, unless we happen to be very poor, to convince us that the great majority of mankind are not personally interested in our well-being; and Uncle Braydon, whom I shall never see again, unless I get to heaven, took care to keep such knowledge away from me. He was not rich, but he lived upon his own property, and always led me to believe that that would one day or other considerably improve. How this was to happen, was not specified, but it was somehow or other connected with, if not dependent on, Sangaree Tannajee. He had been my uncle's servant in the East Indies, and master and man had seen stormy times together, which in some degree no doubt accounted for their close attachment.

Theophilus Braydon had been no covenanted servant of John Company, sitting quietly under the pagoda tree, while the rupees dropped into his open hand; nor had he as an officer idled his time away in cantonments, while ennui and the climate gnawed his liver. He had attached himself, in what capacity I never knew, to the service of Her Highness the Begum of Bundelbad, a native princess notorious for her wealth, her atrocities, and her partiality to Europeans. How so kind-hearted and agreeable an old fellow as Uncle Theo could have witnessed, far less endured, the tyranny of such an old harridan, for such she certainly was, used to excite my childish wonder; but I have since heard the whole story. He was offered a command in her very irregular cavalry. The uniform, in combination with his very handsome appearance, rendered him irresistible in the eyes of the princess so 'partial to Europeans.' Under pretence of his having a genius for accounts, of which he knew absolutely nothing, she made him steward of her household, and after a prolonged resistance, wedded him *vi et armis*, although she was nearly three times his age. I have a portrait of my aunt by marriage now lying before me, painted by a native artist; and certain therefore, if he valued his head, to be at least no unflattering likeness. 'Rich and rare are the gems she wears.' She has not, indeed, 'a human thigh-bone in her hair,' because she has not enough capillary attraction to sustain such an ornament, but she has a ring of immense value through her nose. Her royal features are of

a maple complexion, upon which circumstance she prided herself exceedingly (most of the ladies of her court being of a mahogany colour); and they shine exactly like a dining-room table that has just been hand-polished. Her ears are of a truly regal size, the enormous weight of their rich pendants depressing them below her shoulders. She has 'as much gay gold about her middle as would buy half Northumberland,' and I should imagine even the whole of it. 'Her feet beneath her petticoat like little mice peep in and out,' or rather they would do so if they were about a tenth of their size; as it is, they rather protrude than peep. The Begum of Bundelbad was, in fact, severely afflicted with elephantiasis. Except for these imperfections, she might perhaps have been a charming woman, but for the expression of her eyes, which was demoniacally wicked and cruel. It was her habit, Sambo once informed me, to cause all women whom she considered more beautiful than herself to be buried alive, their cries (see *Wildred the Half-caste*) being drowned by the noise of tom-toms. Fortunately, she was very conceited, so the occurrence did not take place so often as one would imagine.

In the military service of this Princess, as the steward of her household, and finally as her lawful husband, with the title of Maharajah, my dear uncle passed many years—the last ones, I fear, not altogether of honeymoon happiness. It was an ill-assorted union at the best. In friendship, difference of age is nothing:

We talked with open heart and tongue

Affectionate and true;

A pair of friends, though I was young,

And Matthew seventy-two.

But in love—my uncle being young, and the Begum seventy-two, for instance—this disparity became of consequence: there were earth-shakings, and then a final eruption and disruption; many brawls, and one frightful blow-up, in which but too many innocent persons were implicated. After my uncle's escape, which he accomplished in the company of his faithful servant, Sangaree Tannajee, the irritated princess planted a whole garden with her maids of honour, dibbled them in in rows like scarlet-runners, to 'make them remember' (such was her bitter phrase) the fugitive soldier's escapade. The ex-maharajah and his much-reduced staff had to cut their way through some of his late subjects. His pension as king-consort was not, as you may easily imagine, continued after this occurrence; although, I believe, he did contrive that the quarrel should take place at the beginning of the quarter. But my dear uncle brought away with him much of what may be called his 'personalty'—as many of the costly presents which the Begum had showered upon him in her misplaced passion as his horse could carry; and it was with the proceeds of the sale of these articles—sufficient to stock a fancy bazaar—that Hershell Point was bought, and the maintenance of our household secured.

I do not for a moment pretend that any sentiment of affection for that abominable old Begum prevented my uncle's marrying again after her

death, or, for that matter, while she was alive. They had not been wedded in church, you see, or even at a register-office; that Bundelbad ceremony, consisting, as it probably did, in the burning of cedar chips and the burial of young persons alive, would not have held water in any English court of law; but his experience of the married state had been such as to determine Uncle Theo to remain a bachelor to the end of his days; and, fortunately for me, he stuck to his determination. 'I shall never marry, my dear boy,' he once observed to me. 'When I am gone, this little place will be your own, and I hope you will have a better income to keep it up with;' and then his eye would wander significantly towards Sangaree Tannajee pulling up onions in the garden, with an expression of countenance as though he was losing caste by the operation, and thereby consigning himself to perpetual perdition. It was impossible, in that moment of generous kindness, that I could ask my benefactor what that ill-looking old Hindu could possibly have to do with my future prospects; and when an opportunity did offer itself of putting this question, Uncle Theo, instead of replying with his usual frankness, returned an evasive answer. 'That Tannajee,' said he, 'is a Perfect Treasure, Marmy, and I would not lose him for ten thousand pounds.'

I have wandered from the relation of my literary pursuits, as I wander from all else, at the mention of that mystery of our household—that great, unintelligible Tannajee, whose story, to my mind, like Aaron's serpent, swallows up all other stories by virtue of its wonderful attraction.

Let me now endeavour to resume my own humble narrative.—I have said that I was a poet; nor was it to be wondered at that an impressionable youth, brought up among folks with so strange an experience of life as my uncle and his servant had had, and amid scenery so noble as that which surrounded our place of abode, should have acquired some romantic tastes, even though he should not have been born with them. I believe, however, that I was naturally endowed with something of the faculty divine of song, the germ of what might have ripened into worthy fruit, had sunshine and favouring breezes nurtured it to maturity, as they did at first. I think so now, but I felt quite convinced of it in the days of those *Lines to —*. What golden days they were, from the breezy morn, when I arose and ran down to the shore, leaping from rock to rock, to the calm summer night, when I lay awake, watching the broad path of the moon upon the waves, and listening to their dreamy melody! Hershell Point was, as its name implies, a narrow headland, stretching far into the sea. Upon one side, the ocean lay illimitable, without hint of land, although the wizard clouds would often shape themselves on the horizon into wild mountain-ranges; but on the other it was bounded, although a great way off, by tall white cliffs. The sea-breezes never died, but whispered soft and cool upon the calmest day; and in the winter weather raged and roared, especially if they set from the south-west, like let-loose demons. The coast at that time (for a light-house has been set up since upon the very site of our cottage) was strewn with wreck on mornings after storm. The neighbouring burial-ground (there was no church), which, small as it was, would have sufficed for the needs of many generations of the scanty native population, was filled

with graves of shipwrecked strangers. Many and many a time—as I have been walking on the golden sands, when the waves, after a night of furious passion, were glittering with ten thousand smiles, and breaking into laughter on the beach—have I seen, huddled up above high-water line, some shapeless form, which once was man or boy, and have straightway run up the 'cripple' path—the ladder cut in the steepest part of the cliff, but the shortest way to the village—to let the sexton know that he was wanted. The incident was too common to terrify me, but I had a morbid horror of such spectacles, and fled from them. Still oftener, in the dead of night, I have been awakened by the boom of guns, and knew that one of the vast fleet of ships which every day passed by us with their unknown companies upon their unknown way, would never complete its journey, but would give our coast its timbers, and our bay its dead. There was small hope for any vessel that once struck upon that fair but inhospitable shore, and especially at night. My uncle, kindly soul, never failed, however, to give his utmost aid. While I was still wondering whether I indeed heard guns or only the roaring wind, he would often enter my chamber dressed, and bid me hasten to the village, and bring what help I could, while the Hindu and himself went down to the shore.

It was to Hershell Point, from its position, that the news of such disasters was always carried first, for the hamlet lay inland. Although its people were mainly fisher-folk they obeyed my summons eagerly enough; I do not say from greed, nor yet entirely from philanthropy; their motives were mixed. They would save life if they could; but they would also save property, with the intention of keeping it for themselves. Their cottage-furniture, or at least what was best of it, was mainly provided in this manner; their upholsterers, so to speak, were Ship, Sea, Wind, & Co., who, moreover, dealt in miscellaneous goods of all sorts. At one time we were glutted with sponges, a cargo of which, from the West Indies, was discharged in this summary manner without invoice; at another, oranges and lemons bobbed up and down upon the surface of our little cove as plentifully as air-bubbles. Some sorts of goods suffered greatly in the process of delivery; but there was really no reason for the bitter complaints that ensued on such occasions, since we got them all for nothing.

Hershell folks had been all smugglers in the last generation, but in my time there was but little of that illicit commerce. The legends of 'the Free-traders,' as they called themselves, were probably more romantic than their deeds had ever been; and to know that a 'good run' had been effected in this or that adjacent cove, not without bloodshed, or that the great cavern in Sandcliff had been once a dépôt for brandy and lace, added to the imaginative attractions of the neighbourhood. Similarly, these wrecks were almost more terrible to think of—to be awake while those minute-guns boomed, and picture the calamity for one's self—than to witness; so little of them could generally be seen by reason of the fury of the waves and the force of the tempest. They were close at hand, for it was on the reef below the Point that they came ashore; but the blinding spray shut most of the sad sight out, and the thunder of the breakers drowned all other sounds. Feeble lights would shew themselves on board the doomed ships, only to be

extinguished by the next wave; figures running hither and thither, or lashed to the rigging, with tossing arms; and then, when some monster wave whelmed all, a single desolate cry, which, amid that elemental strife, sounded but as the whine of a seagull.

Such incidents, such memories as these, had something of melodrama in them as well as of pathos; and they impressed my youthful mind accordingly.

I had heard stories of peril and combat from the lips of one who had himself been engaged in such scenes. I had myself witnessed spectacles, any one of which might form the *pièce de résistance* in a full-grown man's reminiscences, while children of my own age were elsewhere digging sand-heaps with wooden spades, or hunting for common objects of the sea-shore with a pail and a magnifying-glass. It is no wonder, therefore, and no feather in my cap at all, that it might have been said of me at fifteen years of age that 'young Edwin was no vulgar boy.' If I had been so, I must have been born with such a natural tendency for the commonplace as to almost amount to genius. Books and magazines, which I devoured, were the only links which connected me with what is called the world. I knew nothing of what others of my own age knew—no Greek nor Latin, no cricket nor football. I had never been on horseback in my life—had never enjoyed a tuck-out at a pastrycook's. On the other hand, I could climb—not trees—for we had no trees to be called such, but cliffs, like a chamois-hunter; I could run swifter than that 'best pony in the country,' which belongs to every schoolboy whose father can afford to keep it; I could swim like a fish, and dive like one of those long-throated cormorants which haunted Hershell Reef at low-water. I lived in the sea and the open air. The martins who had their nest under the eaves above my bedroom window were my chamberlains to call me in the summer mornings, and I was commonly up and out soon after sunrise. It was a grand thing to have the world all to myself—not a creature on the downland above the cliff-top, nor yet on the broken ground, all rock and foliage, that lay between it and the beach; not even a sheep or a cow, as would often be seen later in the day, standing statue-like on the summit of some solitary eminence, clear cut against the sky.

It is only bird and insect life that are astir in the matin prime. How solemn, although vague and inarticulate, is the lesson that Nature teaches us at such a time in that great out-door school of hers—how different from what is preached and taught in chapel and seminaries! We seem to be like him of old who walked alone with God in the garden. It might be the first morning that ever was made.

I was not without religious culture; a loving mother had lived long enough to implant those principles in my childish breast which had made her death-bed (save for her solicitude on my account) like the setting off upon a pleasure-cruise; but besides that, I had the devotional impulse which belongs to the poetic temperament, and although quite unaware how the world looked outside my Eden, I felt grateful to Providence for having placed me where I was. My uncle Theo, despite his name, was no theologian, but he encouraged me to believe all I ever heard from my mother's lips, to do all she had enjoined upon me, and to cherish her memory. A beautiful loving

face, with tearful hazel eyes, and soft brown hair, is all the picture; but it hangs in that portrait-gallery of the past, for which every earthly house not built with hands has room, the tenderest and best remembered still of all. I fear her history was not a happy one, but I am not acquainted with its details; she has long been at rest from all troubles, and reaps the promised harvest of God's golden grain.

I think it was her sorrows that first moved my uncle's heart towards me; he always spoke of her with inexpressible pity and tenderness. We needed his protection sorely; indeed, I have a dim recollection (although this may not be trustworthy) that we sought it of him at Hershell Point on foot; but, at all events, he had sheltered us both for years; and when she left us for the churchyard on the cliff, he filled her place towards me as well as he could, as also that of the father whom I never knew. Thus, in a vague and desultory manner, have I pictured the home of my boyhood and its surroundings, just as they recur to my mind, disconnectedly and vaguely enough, but not without a certain harmonious completeness too, like the chords of a harp struck by the wayward wind.

CHAPTER II.—MY FIRST LOVE.

Doubtless, other boys immured in school-rooms, and kept close to their books, would have gladly left them for such delights as mine; while, on the other hand, I, to whom all days were alike holidays, was intensely fond of reading. I do not doubt but that at sixteen years old I had read more English fiction and English poetry than any lad of my own age at public school or private. From Mary Ann Radcliffe to G. P. R. James; from Shakspeare to Tennyson—I had read all that I could lay my hands on. I had quite exceptional opportunities for this sort of study. In a certain little town six miles away (and yet that which lay nearest to us), dwelt one Mrs Eleanor Blunt, whose name was once a household word among all readers, although the present generation hears of it only now and then. She had built herself a charming little cottage close by the sea, all out of the proceeds of her works, and kept herself, an attached old maid-servant or two, and a pony and chaise, by her diligent pen. The knowledge of these circumstances had always excited in me the profoundest veneration; my enthusiasm was ready laid, like a housemaid's fire, so that it is not to be wondered at that when chance gave me an opportunity, when quite a small boy, of becoming personally acquainted with her, I fell in love with her at once. Our ages were more disproportionate than those of my uncle and the Begum had been; but my devotion was of a more Platonic kind. She had seemed to me to be like some celestial body seen afar, whose orbit was altogether beyond my humble sphere, although I was not without a secret hope that my literary talents might some day attract her sublime regards. I was always picturing for myself some success in literature which should bring Mrs Eleanor Blunt over to Hershell, to make the acquaintance of her gifted young neighbour, whereas our acquaintance was destined to be brought about in an altogether different manner. I had been strolling along our cliff-road so far as where it met the main highway, one afternoon, when I suddenly heard a jingling of wheels, and there flew by me a small vehicle, with a tiny old lady in it, drawn by

an audacious little pony at full gallop. Confident that a person of her age and sex could not be driving at this speed for a wager, and also perceiving that she was clutching the splash-board instead of the reins, I started in pursuit. I could at that time have run down an antelope (in the shafts of a four-wheeled chaise), so that it did not at all exhaust my energies to catch and stop the pony.

'Thank you, young gentleman,' said the old lady in a sharp squeaky voice: 'you have got good legs, and likewise lungs.' It was those personal qualities, then, and not my style as a British classic, which first drew forth Mrs Eleanor Blunt's approbation. I knew the famous old lady at once. The diminutive figure, the huge head, the snow-white locks, the bright, black, beady eyes had been made familiar to me by her portraits. I regarded her with undisguised admiration. Here was the individual who had won the hearts of an entire generation—nay, who had moved old and young alike to smiles and tears: she was the prose-poet of the country; the narrator of village joys and sorrows; the word-painter of woods and fields, and yet she had not appealed in vain even to the dull ears of fashion, but had filled the two greatest London theatres, and that at the same time, by her stirring dramas.

'Perhaps, young gentleman,' said she in a voice like that of Punch, but nodding very good-naturedly, 'when this gratuitous exhibition is over—when you have stared at me to your heart's content, you will just turn my pony's head round, and fasten his curb.—My dear little *Proudfoot* would never have run away, would he,' inquired she of the pony coaxingly, 'but that his curb came undone?'

The little creature (whose curb was quite as it should be) shook his head, snorted, pawed with his fore-foot, and answered, as far as pantomime could: 'Yes, I would, and I'll do it again.' It was quite impossible to misunderstand him.

'Madam,' said I, with my best air, 'it will give me the utmost pleasure to see you safe to Sandiford—to drive you thither, if you will permit me.' I had never taken a pair of reins into my hands in my life; but I could have driven a fiery griffin with packthread, for the chance of a *tête-à-tête* with Mrs Eleanor Blunt.

'You're a good boy,' said she, making room for me on the little seat, 'and a kind-hearted one too, to be so careful of an old woman. Just look to the traces, and then jump in. He's the quietest pony in the world when the trace does not get loose, and vex him—ar'n't you, *Proudfoot*?—Well, and what school are you at, my young friend?'

'I have never been to school at all, madam.'

'What a very lucky boy!' smiled the old lady. 'Never been stuified with fusty, musty learning, eh? Never been caned? Never been kept in during the fine weather? Never learned to read, perhaps?'

'O yes, ma'am, and to write too,' remarked I with meaning, for I wished, above all things, to bring the conversation round to literature, and eventually to my manuscript works.

'Ah, that's bad,' said the old lady, shaking her head. 'Now, if you had learned to drive instead—you as nearly tipped us over that heap of stones as near could be—I should have liked you a great deal better.—What's that sticking out of your pocket? A book. Let me look at it! Shelley's Poems—and dog-leaved too! Oh, this is

very bad indeed—*Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude*. You read that, do you?—Give me the reins, young gentleman; I am not going to trust my neck to a lad of your age who reads *Alastor*!'

My boyhood had been, I verily believe, a tearless one, but I was within a very little of bursting into tears at this threatened indignity from hands I so revered.

Her bright eyes instantly perceived my emotion.

'I am a very uncivil old woman,' said she, 'and quite deserve to have my neck broken; but I mistook your character altogether, my boy, on account of your having such good legs and lungs. It is very unusual for folks to be strong and clever too, else the hippopotamus would be king of us all. A boy that could catch *Proudfoot* when at full speed—there's the reins under his tail; he's the quietest pony in the world, except when that happens—ought to be all muscles, and wind, and mischief. I thought you were all muscles, and wind, and mischief, and I apologise.—Now, tell me all about yourself. You have no father, of course; but you've a mother, who makes an idol of you, eh?'

'Alas, no, madam; I am an orphan.'

'Well, that's just my case,' said the old woman cheerfully. '*Proudfoot* is as near a relative as I have in the world. That means, you know,' added she in explanation, 'that I have got none; neither chick nor child. I had at one time a first-cousin once removed, but he has been removed altogether these thirty years.—Now, come, you are not so much alone in the world, my young *Alastor*, as all that comes to?'

'O no, madam; I live at Hershell Point with my uncle Braydon.'

'What! is the ex-maharajah your uncle?' exclaimed the old lady with twinkling eyes; and I saw that her fat little frame was convulsed with inward laughter. Doubtless, she was thinking of some gossip of the neighbourhood respecting the deceased Begum of Bundelbad; but I did not understand that at the time, and I did not like her laughing at Uncle Theo.

'My uncle is the best man in the world, madam,' said I with spirit; 'and if you have heard anything to his discredit, I will answer for it that it is—that your informant, I mean, has been mistaken.'

'Say what you were going to say, young gentleman—say that it is a great big bouncing lie,' said the old lady approvingly. 'I like you for your sticking up for your good uncle, and telling me (by implication) that I was a scandalous old frump, a thousand times more than for your carrying Shelley in your pocket. A good honest heart, my dear, is better worth having than the most tender sensibility.' And from that moment, until her death, which did not take place for many years, Mrs Eleanor Blunt always called me 'my dear.'

She gave me a hearty welcome at her pretty cottage, which, although close to the outskirts of Sandiford, stood in a very bower of fuchsias and roses, all alone by the sea. But it was the inside of the little house that pleased me most. Upstairs and down-stairs, and (quite literally) in my lady's chamber, the walls were lined with books. Paper and paint were rendered unnecessary; the very doors were in some cases whole shelves of books that moved upon a pivot. They were almost all presentation copies. Indeed, I remember Mrs Blunt once telling me that she had gone into the town 'and bought a book,' with the air of a

person who had been guilty of an inexcusable extravagance. 'No, my dear,' she would squeak like a little white mouse, 'I have written too many books myself to buy such things.' But she was in reality a very glutton at reading, and it was a wonder how her eyes kept so bright and keen. She did not so much 'devour' books—a phrase which gives one some idea, however rude, of digesting them—as 'consume' them in broad acres, and with incredible velocity, like a prairie fire. It is true she never read a 'hard' book. The metaphysicians, to whom she would refer as 'gentlemen who did not know what to think,' stood untouched upon her top-shelves; the divines, for whom she had a great respect—'I would do anything for them except read them, my dear'—were kept in a glass case. Her especial weakness was for French Memoirs, such as those of Madame de Crequi, and even of much queerer ladies. 'They don't hurt me, my dear, but they might hurt you; and, therefore, never ask me for one of them.' But she was familiar with the whole range of English literature, and her memory was prodigious. She had met almost everybody who, according to my then standard, was worth meeting, and had something characteristic to tell of each. I am obliged to confess that she rather destroyed my illusions respecting some of them. She had the sharpest tongue that ever I listened to either of man or woman, and the grasshopper shrillness of her tiny voice added piquancy to her satire. She would often conclude a disparaging anecdote concerning some living literary idol of mine with: 'So don't believe in him, my dear, because, you see, he's a rogue.'

'But you destroy my faith in all my heroes, Mrs Blunt,' I once remonstrated.

'Yes, my dear; but you must remember that I have been *valet de chambre* to all of them.'

I did not half understand her at that time; her wit was altogether too subtle for me; but I comprehended enough, when she abstained from epigram, to find her even then a most charming companion. She delighted in talk, and I dare say my simple enthusiasm (and perhaps I should add, my genuine admiration for herself) made my juvenile society very palatable to her. The good people of Sandiford did not much frequent Seaview Cottage. They were no great loss, from an intellectual point of view, perhaps; but I think the genial old lady would have enjoyed their gossip, had she been favoured with it. Unhappily, however, the activity of her pen had caused her tongue to fall into disuse. The Sandifordians having come upon certain very life-like descriptions of commonplace people in their local authoress's works, were seized with the idea that she had satirised them in particular; whereas it is my opinion that she never took a single 'character' from that place, nor did I ever hear her speak an ill word against one of her neighbours. Nevertheless, I was myself so prejudiced by what I heard concerning her Sandiford sketches, that when she expressed her intention of calling at Hershell Point on the ensuing day to tell my uncle what a perfect nephew he might have, if he would only teach him to drive, I blurted out involuntarily: 'But you won't put the ex-maharajah into a book, dear Mrs Blunt, will you?'

Then I saw her angry for the first, and almost the last time.

'No, my young friend,' said she in a voice like

concentrated bitter aloes, 'I never pepper small game.' A remark, however, which peppered me, I remember, most uncommonly.

COLOURS.

THE infirmity known as 'colour-blindness' is much more prevalent than one might suppose; and directors of railways, when selecting candidates for the posts of engine-driver, stoker, or signal-man, are often astounded by the number of candidates they find afflicted with it.

It will seem scarcely credible to those who have themselves good eyes, that three men out of five should be quite unable, at a distance of two hundred yards, to tell a green lantern from a red one. The most astonishing mistakes have been made in this particular. Engine-drivers who in broad daylight could see two miles before them down a straight line, and detect a paving-stone on a rail at fifteen hundred yards off, have been known to rush heedlessly by a danger-signal at midnight, and bring a whole train to destruction. And yet the glasses used in the red lanterns that signify 'Beware' or 'Stop,' are always of immense power, and, on a dark night, ought to be clearly visible to the naked eye at a distance of at least five miles. Similarly, sportsmen who attend horse-races or boat-races are often in doubt as to which colour wins, until the victors are close under their eyes; and this although the jockey's jacket may be of the most flaming hue, and although in other respects than that of colour-seeing these people may have excellent, unerring sight. A sailor who on the night-watch will find it quite impossible to say which glass is 'up' at Eddystone or Bell Rock, may be the first next morning to cry out 'Land' from the top of a shaking mast-head. When a mistake is made between colours, the error is almost always attributed to this peculiar obliquity of vision, and colour-blindness itself is said to proceed from malformation of the eye. But every rule has an exception; and there are cases in which confusions are made between one hue and another, without the eye of the seer being in any great way to blame.

Some years ago, a lady had ordered of one of the best house-decorators in Paris two varieties of paper for a villa of hers at Passy. She had imagined the patterns herself: one paper was to be crimson, with black *fleurs-de-lis*; and the other green, with pale gray figurings. The order was sent to the manufacturers, and the paper fabricated; but when the first samples were forwarded to Passy, the lady returned them, saying a mistake had been made. The *fleurs-de-lis* on the crimson were green, she added, and the figurings on the green paper pink. The shopman who was the bearer of the samples could not help telling his master that he was quite of the same way of seeing as the lady; and the decorator himself, as he examined the specimens, was fain to own that his order had not been executed. The patterns were accordingly returned to the manufacturers; but hereupon a dispute arose, for the latter swore by all the saints that the black they had used was of the deepest jet; and as for the gray figurings, 'they had mixed colours long enough,' they cried, 'to know the difference between gray and pink.' As the alteration was serious, an 'expert' was called upon to decide; and this he did by taking a sheet of white note-paper, and cutting out in it

some fleurs-de-lis of the exact size and form of those on the samples. He then applied the note-paper to the latter, so as completely to hide the crimson ground; and the flowers, which had seemed green, at once stood out in deep black. The experiment was repeated on the green paper with the same success: the figurings which every one had declared pink were shewn beyond doubt to be pale gray: and the lady, the decorator, and the shopman had to acknowledge themselves in the wrong.

A mistake of this kind would scarcely be possible now-a-days, for an upholsterer would take care to warn his customers in time, in the event of their giving him so eccentric an order; but it is not so very long since that the theory of the modification of tints by juxtaposition has become universally known, and even now there may yet be persons who have something to learn on the subject.

Here is an experiment familiar enough to school-boys: Take a square of scarlet paper or silk, and fix it upon a white ground; look then intently at it for a few seconds, and the scarlet will seem to have a slight bordering of green. Again, gaze fixedly at the scarlet square during half a minute, and then turn your eyes suddenly upon a sheet of white paper, an optical illusion will cause you to see upon the white ground a square of the same size as the red one, only of a pale green tint. The eye which has been looking at red invariably lends a green hue to whatever it may gaze on next; and, conversely, the eye which has stared at green, gives to surrounding objects a tinge of red. These two colours, red and green, are said from this fact to be *complemental* to each other.

In the same way, *violet* is the complement of *pale yellow*, *blue* of *orange*, *indigo* of *orange-yellow*; and the results predicted in the experiments with red and green will be obtainable in a similar trial with each of these pairs respectively.

One of the properties of complementary colours is to make up *white* by mutual blending; that is, that white light being composed of different coloured rays, when it falls upon an object, one portion of these rays is absorbed, the other rays are reflected; and the object appears to be coloured by these last. But these absorbed rays and these reflected rays would, if blended again, re-form the white light of which they are the elements; hence a second reason for the term *complemental*.

Let us say a few words now about those phenomena which have been technically called *simultaneous contrasts*.

It is admitted as an axiom that 'different colours always appear most dissimilar when placed side by side;' in other words, that the juxtaposition of various colours has the effect of making what differences exist in their respective tints stand out most strikingly. To illustrate this, let two skeins of wool be taken, of the same crimson dye and quite identical: let us term them C and C'. After this, let us take two other skeins of paler crimson dye, D and D', and place them thus:

C C'D' D

The two skeins C' and D' being juxtaposed—that is, touching each other—the skein C', although of precisely the same hue as the skein C, will then appear darker than it; whilst, on the other hand, the skein D', although exactly similar to the pale skein D, will seem to be lighter of hue than the latter. Thus, when a dark tint is placed next to

a light one, the dark appears to become yet darker, and the light still lighter; the dissimilarity between colours being always heightened by juxtaposition.

Here is a second experiment. Take a sheet of paper, and divide it into five compartments—1, 2, 3, 4, 5—and give to each a coating of Indian ink. When the ink is dry, give a second coating to all but the *first* compartment; after that, a third coating to all but the *first* and *second*; and so on to the end, until compartment 5 has received five coatings; compartment 4, four coatings; compartment 3, three coatings; &c.

At first thought, it would seem that the paper thus painted would have five compartments of different blackness, each separate compartment being, however, of a uniform tint throughout; and such, indeed, would be the case were the paper cut up into five strips, and each strip looked at by itself; but the effect produced by the juxtaposition of the five compartments is not by any means the same. Compartment 2, for instance, instead of appearing one-hued throughout, will appear to be of two different tints—that on the side of column 1 being considerably darker than that on the side of column 3; and similarly, compartment 4 will seem, like 2 and 3, to be painted with two shades of black—one dark, on the side next to 2, and the other light, on the side juxtaposed to 5.

Coming now to other colours, let us see what will happen if we place orange and violet, green and violet, &c. together.

Painters, it must be remembered, acknowledge but three prime colours—blue, red, and yellow. All other tints are compounds of these. Violet is made up of blue and red; green, of blue and yellow; orange, of red and yellow. In the case, then, of violet and green juxtaposed, each colour has one element, blue, in common. But this similarity on one point makes the dissimilarity on the others stand out more clearly, so that the green on the violet appears more yellow, whilst the violet, on the other hand, appears more red. In like manner, if orange and green be taken—the yellow element in the one cancelling, so to say, the yellow in the other—the orange will assume a reddish tone, and the green a bluish one.

The foregoing examples suffice to give an idea as to the law of 'simultaneous contrasts.' It remains now to be seen how this knowledge of the property of juxtapositions may be turned to good account.

One of the most laudatory things that can be said of a painter is, that he is 'a good colourist,' that is, that he knows well how to sort his colours. At first, this would seem to be no great praise, and the merit of a well-coloured picture might be thought to be principally with the tradesman who furnished the artist with his box of paints. But go some day to the Louvre, or the National Gallery, and watch a beginner copying a Raphael, a Rubens, or a Titian. What is it, you will exclaim, that prevents the man from copying the colours he sees before him? Why does he put pink where his model has put crimson; sea-green, where the latter has placed gray; orange where the 'maestro' has set ochre? If you consult the artist himself, he will tell you, of course, that it is not his fault; that Raphael and his compeers mixed their own colours, and that their secret has died with them. 'We cannot get colours like those now,' he will add dolefully; and not until some

years after, when he has become a 'Membre de l'Institut,' or an 'R.A.,' will he own that it was not Mr A. or Mr B.'s colours that were bad, but his own craft that was feeble.

A painter who understands his art, knows well that the science of colouring must form a long study of itself. A beginner who wishes to draw a soldier in a red coat and blue trousers, will naively look amongst his paints, and daub the tunic of his subject with scarlet all over; after this, he will single out Prussian-blue, and proceed in the same spirit to sketch the nether garments. When this is done, he will look at his work, and find round the rim of the tunic in contact with the trousers a slight edging of orange yellow, for which he had never bargained; and provided he have only put a few ochre spots on the soldier's coat in guise of buttons, he will be not a little surprised to find each of these encircled with a rim of verdigris. 'Make thy scarlet more crimson as it nears the trousers, O man! dip the end of thy brush in green to make the pantaloons less blue where they touch the coat; remember that a tinge of violet will do no harm to the yellow that is meant for buttons; and then, but not before, will thy soldier be presentable.'

When a picture is sent to the tapestry-maker's, to be copied in wool-work, the most ridiculous blunders are made, if the workman be not thoroughly skilled in the science of colouring. He will lay white and scarlet side by side, and marvel to find a green rim between them. 'I can't make it out at all,' he growls. The foreman shrugs his shoulders, and holds out to him a skein of pale gray. 'Put this instead of your flaming white on the lines where the two colours meet; and instead of that glaring scarlet, take this dark pink to lay along the gray.' The workman obeys, and the green rim disappears. But elsewhere is a poor wretch trying to insert a ray of yellow between two lines of violet and black. 'What are you doing?' shouts the foreman. — 'Looking for a suitable shade of yellow,' groans the well-meaning dunce. — 'Let the yellow be,' is the answer: 'take your brightest violet and your deepest black where the borders touch, and the yellow will come by itself.' And so it does.

One might write a great deal on the subject of these pictorial blunders and the way to correct them, but we shall better employ our time by concluding with some practical hints and observations that may be useful to others than painters.

An upholsterer should be very choice in the colours of stuffs he adapts to different varieties of wood. It is a mistake to cushion a mahogany chair with scarlet. That colour is too bright, and the mahogany beside it loses brilliancy, and becomes like walnut-wood. Many people, however, who love the colour crimson, insist upon putting it with mahogany. In these cases, to counteract the glaring effect of the assortment, it is well to put a black or a green braid on the border, where the cloth and the wood come in contact; or if not this, then an edging of yellow silk, or, better still, of gold-lace with gilt nails.

Those who desire to paper their rooms anew will do well to remember that on red, crimson, and amaranth coloured grounds, *black looks green*. In the same way, black upon green loses all its lustre, and *vice versa*. Orange upon red hurts the eyesight; violet upon blue looks washed out; blue upon green looks spinach colour by candle-light; and

gray, as we have already said, when sorted with green, very often comes out pink.

It having become a custom now-a-days to print advertisements for dead-walls in all the colours of the rainbow, we may tell those speculators who are anxious that their puffs should be seen as far off as possible, that the rule to follow is, that in all cases the colour of the letters should be *complemental* to the ground on which they are printed. Black on a white ground, violet on yellow, red on green, blue on orange, will strike the eye at once.

A word now to gardeners.

Nothing is less brilliant than flower-beds in which the only colours to be seen are blue and white; nothing is more gaudily ugly than a garden stocked with a profusion of yellow and little else. It is very unsatisfactory also to find flowers of the same colour, but of different shades, placed near each other; and all these errors of taste should be avoided. In order that a garden may be showy and attractive, blue flowers should be placed near to dark yellow or orange; violet next to yellow; and red dahlias, roses, pinks, and geraniums should be surrounded with verdure and white.

We shall perhaps astonish Rifle corps on the look-out for a uniform, by telling them that the uniforms which last longest are those that offer the greatest contrasts in point of colours. The uniforms that last shortest are those in which cap, tunic, and trousers are of the same colour. Some riflemen are in the habit of wearing their uniform trousers and cap when off drill; this is especially the case with those whose uniform trousers are gray or whity brown, and the harm is not great where the uniform tunic is of a different hue. But too often it happens that the whole suit is alike; and then the valiant rifleman, when he dons his tunic for parade, is quite astonished at the queer look his trousers have. He has been wearing them perhaps every day, because he likes them, and thinks he looks well in them; but the tunic the while has been lying in a drawer, and the consequence is, that when dressed for drill, the Volunteer's coat looks spick-span new, and his trousers, by contrast, outrageously shabby.

The most showy and most durable of uniforms is the scarlet and green, with silver, not gold lace. The smartest and at the same time most suitable and lasting uniform for a rifleman would be a light gray tunic, with bright green collar and cuffs, double row of silver buttons, and green heading round the edges of the coat; green trousers, with a stripe of paler green; and gray kepi-cap, with green band and slight edging of silver. Such a uniform would look bright and new until it were worn threadbare.

Ladies, of all persons, are most bound to use taste in their selection of colours, and we must do French women, in particular, the justice to own that they usually dress to perfection. English women, of late years, have made progress in the science or art of the 'toilette.' But still some grievous mistakes are at times committed on our side of the Channel; and it would be well if young ladies who study drawing would at times consult their masters on the delicate subject of blending colours.

Let fair-haired beauties abstain from pink, a colour which makes them pale. Let dark-haired maidens take that colour, and remember also that no hue suits *them* so well as saffron. No colour

is so well suited to chestnut hair as lapis-lazuli blue; and the *bleu d'azur*, the *Eton* blue, as it is called in London, is the true *parure des blondes*.

SAVAGES I HAVE KNOWN.

LET me first make a careful distinction. There are savages of civilisation and savages of real savagery; it is of the latter class I would endeavour to record a few sketchy reminiscences. Many persons, of delicate perceptions and estimable character, feel no scruple—rather a great inward contentment—in applying the epithet 'savage' to each and all of their friends who fail to catch the divine excellence of Mr Rossetti's colour, or the celestial harmonies of Mr Whistler's Japanese views of Chelsea, or the majolica of the Marchese Ginori, or the views of Comte and Charles Fourier, or, in fact, the merit of any curious craze which chances to meet their own approval. Not that I myself sit in judgment upon any man's hobby, or venture to declare an admiration or an antipathy on any subject of art or philosophy whatsoever. As one who has lived much, travelled far, and seen many lands and several cities, I have learned to respect the ideas of men, and to wonder in silence where I cannot agree; I have learned also—or flatter myself in so thinking—to waive the expression of my views upon a subject which I do not understand; though views a reasonable man *must* have—whether he know much or little, or nothing at all—upon every subject. Therefore, wiser in this respect, as I love to think, than the pastors of the daily press, I will leave in peace the social and artistic barbarians who swarm, as we are told, in this our native land, and tell only my experiences of the real, unquestioned, conscientious savages who have crossed my wayward path in the odd nooks of this big world which I have girdled.

How the memories come back to me! Memories of laughter and of fear, of downright, honest, side-splitting mirth, of deadly danger, of pleasant 'camaraderie'; memories of lonely wood and sunny river; of camp, and hut, and ruin; every recollection intensified and warmed by a flash of glittering eyes, brown limbs, and honest, manly, wondering faces, pleasant to recall. For I strive to dwell upon my *savage friends* only in these retrospective visions. Too much, I think, have we heard of the horror and ferocity of simple nature—too much, perhaps, do we know; I might tell stories, like another, of the bad men one meets in this land and that, but it is not my wish. Let the recollection of a child's evil habits die with its growth; let us remember only the little one's funny ways—its drolleries and quaint innocence; lest, since the sins of men are writ in brass, while the good 'is oft interred with their bones,' we come to hate and dread the whole generation of children, because, from ignorance, they are cruel now and then; from ignorance, are treacherous; from ignorance, unteachable. I think it is the devoir of every Christian man to speak lightly and kindly of those who are to him but as the beasts that have no revelation, to guide them with his knowledge. And if, by good or bad fortune, he have wandered much among the darker places of the earth, and have gathered unusual knowledge of those who dwell therein, he should not, for a small self-glory, magnify the horrors of his sojourn, but rather point out the good that lies hid in the dim and obscure nature of the savage.

I will take in order the best types of the child-man whom, by good-fortune, as I count it, I have had the opportunity of studying. I will begin in Africa, pass on to Asia, return by Europe—where there is still, as I shall shew, a real, unintelligible, naked savage of savagery—and thence across the wide Atlantic to America.

He must have been a very Lavater, a Morton, a Gliddon, or a Thurnam, who at first sight had recognised Hassan Beni Something as a savage pure and simple, as in truth he was, and, if yet alive, is, I doubt not, still. He was the earliest type I met of this great family, and even yet the most incomprehensible to me. There are many in England who will recognise handsome Hassan; nay—for I think he reads English—it is not impossible that he will recognise himself in studying the back numbers of *Chambers's Journal* in some sweltering calm upon his native Nile. For Hassan is, or was, a dragoman, and a favourite with dukes and earls, and Englishmen generally, whom he has safely piloted along the glorious river. Should he see this notice of himself, I know it will not offend nor move him, as you shall shortly understand.

I first saw Hassan in the veranda or porch of Shepherd's Hotel, when, almost a boy, I set forth upon my travels. Seeing him there, with his beautiful face—so soft in colour and feature, so spirited in expression—with his graceful form wrapped in the joyous costume of a wealthy Arab—Nizam jacket of brown satin, sapor or waistcloth of Persian gold-work, trousers of purple silk, and tarboosh swathed in a handkerchief brighter than flowers—I stood and gazed, being yet fresh to oriental types, and thought that the more delicate style of manly beauty could never by possibility find an embodiment more exquisitely perfect. I spoke to him, and he answered in good English, but with a tone, not disobliging perhaps, but tinged with a certain assumption of superiority, which I did not then in the least comprehend. While we talked, some ladies galloped up the wide and dreary street from Boulak, and halted their donkeys beneath us at the steps of the hotel. They were fresh young girls, rather noisy, very red and hot, having perhaps something more than the average of healthy strength in their limbs and of loud mirth in their voices; but why, I wondered in innocence—why did Hassan draw together his fine eyebrows so very darkly? and why did he spit over his shoulder in that spiteful manner? Seeking the clue, I led our conversation to the topic of native customs in regard to women; but Hassan grimly remarked at once: 'Sir, we poor Arabs have a proverb: A man never talks of his treasure till he has lost it!'

I pondered this oracle for a while, and failing to see its meaning—though dimly conscious that some very fearful rebuke was contained therein—boldly inquired whether so handsome a fellow had a wife, or two, or a dozen.

Hassan gave a sudden start, spat furiously, and with trembling fingers, snatched a document from his belt. 'There, sir,' he said, thrusting the unintelligible characters under my nose—'Hassan Beni Something is a dragoman, licensed by the pacha. He's no slave of yours!'

Half-laughing, half-remorseful, I soothed the fiery fellow; and, in a stately manner, he agreed to pass over my offence.

After this, accident threw me a great deal in

Hassan's way, and I had full opportunity of studying a character of the East which we in England know nothing and think nothing of. The handsome dragoman was a passionate fanatic for his religion; and though scarcely twenty-five years of age, I suppose, could already boast of two conversions. He knew the Koran by heart, of course; and not the Koran only, but a dozen minor prophets of his creed. Finding me very inquisitive, and a capital listener to his marvellous tales, and philosophy not less marvellous, Hassan entertained sanguine hopes of rescuing yet another soul from the devil's claws. I did not know until afterwards what overpowering ambition it was which made the fanatic so tolerant of my continual offences against his code of ethics, many of which, I fear, were committed in pure mischief; but twelve months after, I was assured, on authority not to be mistaken, that prayers had been offered, and hopefully too, on my behalf, by no less a person than the chief dervish of the college at Boulak, my very good friend. It is not every man who can boast that his welfare was so much a care to strangers; and even now, I feel no little pride in thinking that an old man, good and sincere, should have prayed for the safety of my soul, though it were a false prophet.

But to return to Hassan. One by one, not without difficulty, I drew out those wonderful opinions and beliefs, the discovery of which leads me to class this most elegant of dandies, the favourite of peers and princesses, among the very grossest savages in my long list. His philosophy was of the simplest, and may be thus stated: 'This world was created perfect and holy by Allah; every change, spiritual or physical, that had since altered the face of things, was contrived by the influence of Shaitan: therefore were the nations most advanced most sinful.'

'See,' Hassan remarked to me one day at the railway-station in Cairo—'see the devil's sign in this your greatest invention! Fire is his emblem and chief agent; smoke is the token of him; noise and confusion his invariable followers. Are they not all here for a witness? Your railway-trains and your manufactories are taking you all to perdition, sir!'

'Bravo, Hassan!' I replied. 'Yet you do not disdain to profit by our condemnation.'

'I am holy, and the devil serves me,' returned the dragoman with the calmness of conviction.

This was hopeless.

'How can you consent to be a servant of Infidels?' I asked one day.

'I trust that the sight and contact of a believer may turn their wretched minds,' he replied. 'And I thirst to see the holy place at Mecca.'

I was somewhat struck with a remark he made in answer to my inquiry: 'Would you die for your faith, Hassan?'

'Yes, sir. I would fight until I died a thousand times.'

Sometimes—when his hopes of me rose to a sanguine point, I suppose—Hassan even spoke about his family. 'How many converts have you made?' I asked.

'Two, sir. There was a girl also.'

'A girl? Who was she?'

'An Abyssinian slave, sir, whom I bought and married. The white ladies at Alexandria had taught her their false religion, or enough of it to turn her head. I converted her to the truth. She is now devout, as far as a woman can be so.'

'And how did you convince the girl? Did you beat her?'

Hassan gazed at me steadily, with that oriental calm which is the substitute for a Frenchman's shrug, an Italian's 'che!' or an Englishman's loudly phrased disgust.

'You did not beat her? Did you argue with her, then? No? Of course not! A girl! How was the result effected?'

'I told my women to convert her, and it was done.'

'How?' I insisted with boyish pertinacity.

'She is a very good and pious Mussulman.'

'But how did it come about?'

The rare and soon-veiled glance of humour came to Hassan's eyes. 'I don't know,' he said; 'I didn't ask; but—I saw a large pin lying about when I returned home!'

'And with what instrument did you secure your other proselytes? A thumbscrew? There's a good deal of business done hereabouts with a common ladder, I've heard, or even with a bucket and a wasp's nest. Which is your favourite tool for converting folks?'

'Sir,' replied Hassan with dignity, 'I have told you the other two were *men*!'

Yet this strange fellow had supported his step-mother in idleness for many years, and had pinched himself to marry his sisters respectably, and to their own wish.

I bade adieu to Hassan among the mud-built huts of El Luxor, firing a last shot at his philosophy as I turned towards the Nile. 'See these mighty ruins,' I said, 'built by pagans; see these kennels of the true believers built among them. If, without sin, you may command the devil, would it not be well to set him at work among your brethren?'

'Nay,' replied the fanatic; 'for there are weak hearts even among the faithful, and to tempt them would be unpardonable sin. I rather pray daily that the Infidel arts may perish, and the world grow pure again!' Clearly, a hopeless savage, but honest and kindly as he was handsome.

Of a very different type was the second example I shall select from a crowded *répertoire*. A worthy man he was, dwelling in the depths of a Bornean forest, in a house overshadowed with péang palms and 'lancet trees,' thick with acid fruit; a very old man, with the face of a sheep expiring from mental affliction, the form of a gander suffering from atrophy, and the costume of primeval man after the Fall. He sat, when I first caught sight of him, upon a log, in a deep green shadow of giant trees: the expression of his innocent face shewed deep perplexity. Between his naked and distorted feet lay a basket of stained ratan, filled and overflowing with fragments of cloth, tiny bells, boars' tusks, alligators' teeth, dry seeds, deer-horns, threads of wool, and knotty twigs. Over these valuable 'properties' the old man was pondering, much harassed in mind by the incurable stomach-ache of his 'orang kaya,' or chief. For this typical savage of mine was a 'manang,' a medicine-man, a conjurer, thief-catcher, devil-fighter, of some eminence among the worthy Undups, as his tribe are called. Straightway, perceiving him thus occupied, and warned by my Malay guide—not without some awe, though the laugh of orthodox scorn rang out very clearly—what was the profession of this forest-born practitioner, I addressed him with spirit, and was

answered in all politeness. Would I could render the terms of our conversation with the simplicity and humour which no doubt they carried; but, alas, the manang's voluble tongue spoke no intelligible dialect to me, and I myself was not yet so conversant with Malay that I could even talk with my interpreter first-hand. But somewhat in this manner our discourse proceeded, as I am told:

I. Ask the old fellow what he is doing here, Ali.

Interpreter. The lord who eats at the rajah's table asks why you are not at your unimportant work in the rice-fields, Infidel.

Manang. I am praying for the safety of my lord.

Interpreter. He say he make charms for have you brave and lots of wife.—That a lie, Tuan!

I. Ask him what are those odds and ends in the basket there.

Interpreter (directly). Oh, them be dam rubbish, Tuan—what he make medicine of, to doctor fools when they sick. All nonsense and dirty rags, Tuan!

I. Ask the old man.

Interpreter. The lord who sleeps in the rajah's bed condescends to inquire what you mean by collecting such infernal bosh as that basket contains, Infidel?

Manang. The lord is very kind to his slave.—These are the evil spirits I have extracted from my numerous and deeply grateful patients. They have great power to cure the sick, to drive out the best-born devils, and to insure good harvests. They are the chief treasures of the Undups.

Interpreter (with wrath). O infidel dog, Dyak cow! Will you repeat your mummeries before my face? Will you insult the meanest follower of the Prophet? Will you—will you—

I. Easy, Ali! What does the old boy say?

Interpreter. I say he a pig, Tuan!—a dog, a foul Dyak sorcerer! He know our holy faith; and instead of that, he stick like gum to his bits of bone and feathers! He go to perdition—you go to perdition, old Manang!

Manang. Whatever my lord wishes. I pray for him and all his servants.

Interpreter (at white-heat). You pray for me! You pray for me! you cotton-headed, pé nang-sucking, white-toothed, raki-swilling old impostor! You Dyak djour, that will never see heaven—that has no heaven, nor any Allah, nor spirit, nor future life! You pig, that will sink into the earth as a stone sinks, nor ever be heard of or seen again in the other world! You pray for me to your lumps of wax and bits of bone! Allah, that made me, knows how I would crush the life from your old carcass, were it not that my lord, who leans upon the rajah's knees, and is weak in his poor English head, condescends to take notice of you. Yah!

I. Hold your confoundedly orthodox tongue, Ali! How are these things used?

Interpreter (sulkily). The lord who is acquainted with the rajah's wife by sight, asks what are your confounded games with this rubbish, Infidel?

Manang. Tell my lord these are great secrets. Tell him that they cure the sick, and bring good luck upon a house. Tell him they are mysteries incomprehensible; and their result, when properly used, is infallible. With them I can destroy my enemies and heal my friends, rain storms, bring

rain or sunshine, sink ships, win battles, cause success in head-hunting and the chase. I can do anything—anything. And if the lord be pleased with his slave, good Ali, ask him for a little English medicine to cure the fever that is burning me up—a little of that bitter stuff the 'orang putih' use. I am very ill.

Interpreter (with innocence). The old man's charms, he say, good for anything, and play the dobbil. He want a bit of quinine to cure his ague. Don't give him any, Tuan! He very wicked!

Wondering which was the bigger fool of these two, I went my way through the shadowy forest, all unconscious at the time that I had been introduced to a character of no small note among the simple and superstitious Dyaks. Months after, I was thrown for some time in the company of this medicine-man, and expended much time and ingenuity in the investigation of his real belief; but to this day I cannot tell whether he had faith or not in that strange medley of rubbish which contained his pharmacopœia, his ritual, dogmas, and vestments.*

Returning to Europe, with the half-mournful thought that I had done with savages and savage life for ever, I found myself, one bright and windy Christmas-day, beating back and forth across the mouth of Porto Torres harbour. Do you, O reader, know in what hole or corner of our continent to seek that ancient refuge? Though you be a brother member of the Geographical, I will wager all my 'traveller's tales' you never so much as heard of it. Porto Torres, gentlemen of England, is the northerly harbour of that beautiful island called Sardinia. The granite cliffs which scowl or laugh across the ever-restless sea, the massy walls which gird the island round, gape suddenly at this spot, and leave a narrow and most perilous channel into a tiny bay. No other ports exist, or ever will be formed, probably, on this end of the island. Porto Torres at the north, and the glorious Bay of Cagliari to the south, are the only breaks in the natural defences of this coast. I landed, then, with a gay company, determined to explore the innermost recesses of a land less known to Europe than many a barbarous realm of the antipodes. At my first step ashore, I admired the stately column, standing all alone these thousand years, which still bears witness for Greek art and Roman power; wandering up the street, I admired the countless fragments of temple and bath, column and statue, which now build up whole walls of field and hut. And as I passed beyond the tiny village, I vented my soul in marvelling at masses, piles and hills of ruin, which record the existence here of a city covering miles of ground—I passed beneath colossal archways yet erect, and climbed along Cyclopean walls yet standing—walls older than Rome, older than Athens, old perhaps as the hoary pyramids themselves.

Amazed and bewildered with the discovery of such marvels, feeling somewhat as Stephens may have felt among the ruins of Palenqué, I took my way back to the port, revolving a

* Whether the manang could cure others' sickness—he who could not cure his own!—may with reason be doubted, but I had abundant and unquestionable testimony that he was guaranteed by some means against reptile poison. The Malays assure me that this security is produced by inoculation of the venom in different parts of the body; which may be true. The same practice obtains in America.

communication to the *Times* or *Athenæum* that should startle a blasé world—which communication was never written. But let me tell the antiquarian reader that such treasures of his favourite seeking are to be found in the island of Sardinia as never he dreamed of. Now and then, as the archæologist will remember, gems of art have been brought to England from this soil—Etruscan, Greek, Roman, and Saracen. The priceless scarabæi, which link Egypt with Etruria, the great Greek glasses, a thousand of the most valuable and curious antiquities in our collections, come from this wealthy but most miserable island. Yet I can assure the antiquary that scarce one discovery has been made except by accident; or if there ever were attempts at scientific search, they have long since been abandoned, and dwell not in men's memory. I myself, in such huts as I shall presently describe, have seen vases and urns, bronzes, coins, and household instruments, such as would bring beyond their weight in gold at the dealers' shops of London. None care for them there—they are too common. Nor are the remains of temple and palace less frequent or less interesting. But I dare not dwell upon this fascinating subject.

From Porto Torres—where there is no inn—I took a rattling diligence, which thrice a week traverses the sole road in the island, between Cagliari and this northern harbour. These are indeed the only towns, and they lie something like a hundred miles apart—rather more, if I remember right. Having before us a journey of many hours, we proposed to take the whole inside of the conveyance; but the clerk, with rare honesty, assured us that this expense was quite unnecessary: 'There are never any passengers, signori—never, never!' he said with emphasis. At a certain village, whereof I forgot the name, we left the diligence, and demanded our guides and horses. They came after a while; and in the white and glimmering haze of dawn, we set out in search of a very Nimrod, a mighty hunter, who dwelt a day's journey off among the pine-forests. I have not delayed to speak of the scenery, nor of the strange folks who people it; suffice it that the land is lovely, and the inhabitants hideous. One league from Porto Torres, five from Cagliari, thrusts the Sardinian traveller into the middle ages. Thus were our forefathers six hundred years ago, in costume, in habits, in thought, in everything but speech. And what a marvellous speech that is of the savages! Neither Italian, Spaniard, nor Arab can comprehend it, so ingeniously have the elements of these three languages been hashed up with a seasoning of pure rigmorale. The Maltese, whose Arabic is almost as barbarous, get on best in Sardinia; but the quantity of Spanish and Italian words are just sufficient to confuse the predominant dialect. How little is known, even by their nearest neighbours, of this strange people, will be apparent when I mention that in Italy every one assured us their national tongue was generally spoken, or at least understood, throughout the island—whereas the fact is, as we found at our expense, not one person in five hundred has any knowledge whatever of Italian, or any other language except this bastard Arabic. Let me get to my savage, however—though, indeed, none can avoid digressing in Sardinian travel; for the plains are uncultivated, except around paltry, mud-built villages, which, were it not for the vegetation, one would swear

were Kaffir kraals, or Fellah huts. Where this trifling agriculture is not seen, the ground is covered with a bush-like rhododendron, which, at Christmas-time, spreads a sheet of purple blossom over the plain. Rides, smooth as though trimmed by unseen gardeners, intersect each thicket of the cover, and by these natural paths one winds across the level. Partridges whirl up each instant, pigeons rise in clouds, woodcocks and snipe twist aloft from the pond-banks; now and again, with a mighty clashing of the boughs, a whirlwind of flying leaves, with grunts, and cries, and snapping of teeth, a herd of hogs dash along the path; or a huge red boar, with tusks fresh ground, with lips apart, and little eyes all fiery, trots over by himself, glancing at the intruders, as though undecided whether to pass or to attack. Sometimes, no doubt after domestic troubles such as rouse his lordly nature, he *does* charge, and then—

Have you ever been attacked by a wild-boar? Have you stood all alone, with empty rifle and griped spear, before the forest-king? I have—by night on the golden beach of a far Eastern sea. He fronts me, black and terrible, beside the creeping water, a horrent mass against the spreading halo of the moon. By day, too, I have faced him, in a wood dazzling with the keen tropic light. The brilliant pencilled sun-rays sprinkle his dismal head; his small eyes burn with spite upon me, and seem verily to laugh with triumphant malice. See, see! The rigid bristles of the neck tremble and heave in an agony of rage; the big teeth snap, their foam falls on your face. He has gathered breath. He comes! Now grasp the spear tight, and bend to earth and pray, for rarely in this life doth one face deadlier risk than the charge of a black Eastern boar. That scream!—that ponderous rush! A sudden weight dashes me to earth, while the sun-flecked trees spin round, and the bamboos tear my flesh. I leap up; I dash the blood-drops from my face. Hurrah! The boar lies prone, with a good lance buried to the cross-bar in his heart! Rejoice, comrade, that neither you nor I as yet have felt that deadly sickness, of a pulse-beat's length, which comes o'er the doomed shikari, as his lance-point slides along the leathern shoulder of his foe. For him is no help in the cruel, sunny forest. Too many tragedies the flowers see, too many sudden fates, too many cries of agony they hear! The birds will twitter, and the gemmed flies dance, though a man's body lie in fragments underneath the trees. None will hear your groans, if life remain; none give you aid, while the last gurgling breaths escape your throat; nay, but a thousand tiny foes will set upon you, more cruel far than that brave old boar, who long since has crashed off, triumphing in his vengeance, through the brushwood.

These digressions are intolerable, but forgive them, reader, to an overflowing memory! I will sin no more.

Two days after leaving the diligence-road, we reached the pine-forests, and here I straightway lost, first my guide, and then myself. I rode for some hours in no small anxiety, being already aware how few were the paths, and how scant the population of these hills. It was almost sunset when I struck a path which led me to a little clearing, where I encountered my European savage. And do not suppose that he was an exceptional character of the region; on the contrary, I saw many worse specimens, and few better, of the

human race, in my Sardinian wanderings; but I select him for portraiture because the *mise en scène*, the properties, all about him, were so exquisitely perfect on that first introduction. The clearing had been evidently a Roman mine two thousand years ago. Walls and pits still remained to shew its former use, and more than one of the ruins might have been made habitable by the mere addition of a roof. This style of dwelling, however, is not to the taste of the Sardinian savage. He prefers to select a piece of level ground, which he encloses in walls of timber, like a bear-trap. When the square is complete, he roofs it in with sticks, and moss, and heath; then thinks of providing a door and a window. These necessities are produced by cutting two holes through the walls, and tying the intersected beams firmly together. After entrance and light are thus provided for, he grubs up the turf and bushes *inside*, flattens the ground, puts in a log for a seat, and another for a table, stores his gunpowder in a nook furthest from the usual hearth, and goes out to seek his sustenance among the boars and roebucks of the forest. Their flesh feeds him, their skins make his bed and clothes. If he have a wife, she spins a little wool for under-garments; if he have none, the sale of game from time to time—at one halfpenny a pound for boar's flesh, one penny for venison—supplies him with all things needful. The agricultural instinct is sometimes indulged in a tiny field about the size of a child's garden; more frequently it is not indulged at all; and a porridge of chestnuts and wild vegetables satisfies the moderate desire of change in diet which the savage knows. From week to week he sees no one, except perhaps the wife and possible family aforesaid; he speaks to none except his dogs, or maybe himself; he knows the iron mines, and sometimes smelts a little ore in winter evenings; he knows the silver mines, ay, and the long-lost veins of gold, but rarely turns his knowledge to account; he gathers carbuncles and turquoise, which he barters for powder and spirits; he goes to mass at Christmas, and there confesses his sins, which seem to be more heinous than appears, at first sight, possible; he knows no sin, nor any good, and is as skin-clad, senseless, brutal a savage as in all my wanderings I have seen.

And thus I found him employed, as I rode up the long shadowy aisle of firs that made an avenue to his dwelling. He sat upon a log—a tall, bearded, muscular fellow, not without some remains of that earnest beauty which Moorish ancestors have left to his race at its fairest. His body was enwrapped in a jerkin of wild-sheep skin, the dark-brown ridge of the animal's back falling along his spine, and its white belly clasped across his chest. There it was secured with vast buttons of silver, hanging each by a little chain. Through holes at each shoulder, the wiry arms emerged. His drawers, immensely wide, were of home-spun wool, not white, as is the national fashion, but of a coarse blue; these were tucked tightly into leggings of wild-boar hide, which, as I afterwards discovered, were the real skin of the animal's legs, stripped off uncut, and fitted, while still soft, to the limbs of the human brute. The occupation of my savage, when I discovered him, was beautifully harmonious; he was breaking up a 'muffloné,' that rare animal, which now only survives among these mountains. Around the carcass, with eager eyes, crowded a pack of dogs,

fat and handsome enough, which fought for the morsels flung from time to time among them. Suddenly, their master thrust his reeking arm into the carcass, and produced a gory mass—Heaven knows what dainty! This he balanced for an instant in his hand, then, with some harsh call, tossed it into the air. A child, yes, a girl, suddenly bounded up from her couch upon the ground, and caught the precious prize before it fell. She laughed with glee—I saw her and heard her!—and straightway, pressing the horrid streaming object to her naked bosom, vanished into the house. And simultaneously, all the dogs caught sight of the intruder, and dashed at me.

The savage rose hastily, and snatched up his long gun. I made signs of friendship, and drew near. He called off the dogs, and welcomed me without a word, yet in a manner not quite devoid of that grave courtesy which his darker brethren practise. I asked for food in the French patois of Corsica, in Italian, in Spanish, and lastly, in Malay; he understood not a whit, but resumed his seat for greater convenience of staring. I made signs, and at a call the horrid child emerged again from her retreat, and, with a fearsome bashfulness, approached. The savage gave me to eat—I know not what horror. He sat with his long gun between his knees, and watched. It grew dark. I recalled my Arabic, and asked for a bed. The dreadful child took me within, and pointed out a pile of deerskins. The savage followed us after a while, with his gun at the 'order.' Inspired by his example, I clasped my rifle between my knees, and lay down, as many a time had I lain in less dangerous company. Less dangerous? Not so! I will bear peril with any man and cry not, but—horrible insects—in my bed I cannot endure! For a time, I reasoned with my nose, my gorge; finally, with every inch of skin upon my body; then I arose and sallied out cautiously. At the instant they were on my track, the savage and his whelp—one armed with the inevitable gun, the other with a knife. Ah! but the moonlight was glorious without, streaming down in snowy flakes through the wide branches of the pines, lighting up those sculptured witnesses of a grander time which lay around the hovel.

I paid no attention to my host, but leisurely selected a dry spot beneath a pine, threw myself down, and slept with one eye open. And at midnight came my friend, with both the guides; and he fired his rifle over me, to rouse the savage. For behold, all unaware, I had stumbled on the abode of A'h-mari, the greatest shikari of Sardinia, of whom we had been in search. He was a savage of savagery; and, such as he was, is he still, I doubt not. There is no reformation, no hope nor chance, for such as he.

This paper grows too long, or I would gladly cross the Atlantic with my reader, and portray for his instruction the various types of American barbarism. One word more only; a word I have wished long to utter, for the benefit of English sportsmen and travellers. Go to Sardinia, you who love shooting, and are not afraid of hardship. There will you find feathered game thicker than sparrows in England; there will you find roebuck and wild-boar in such numbers that your very arm will ache with slaughter; there, with luck and skill, may you once, or even twice or thrice, stand over the carcass of the glorious muffloné, and boast of the moment to your dying

day, seeing that almost every head of the noble beast still surviving is numbered and known among the foresters.

If you be an antiquary, go to Sardinia. If you be a miner, a philologist, go to Sardinia, for there are fortunes in its rocks, and fame in its unintelligible tongue. But if you be not stout and sturdy, withstand temptation, and stay at home.

OLD LONDON LIFE.

FROM time to time, in some dusty old folio, one comes across a bird's-eye view of mediæval London, half-picture, half-map. We are become familiar with the labyrinth of streets and lanes, with the masses and blocks of quaint old houses, tall and narrow, as if jammed between the river and the city walls, they had struggled up towards the sunshine from the smoke and gloom below. And, standing out clear from the mass, we see the tapering spire of old St Paul's as it used to be; the solid strength of the towers of Julius, much as they are now; and old London Bridge, with the swift tide tumbling in cataracts past its wooden piles. But of the people that swarmed in that warren of human life, we have the vaguest possible notions. We learn that St Jackins and Gramercy represented the 'By Jove!' and yet more emphatic invocations of our times; and that hippocras, and mead, and pigment did duty for sherry or bitter beer. But even trenchant impressions like these stand out in a dim haze of ignorance and uncertainty, and we are about as conversant with the manners of our civic forefathers as with those of republican Rome or ancient Babylon.

Indeed, it is seldom that we can have a chance of finding ourselves face to face with the everyday life of the commons of the middle ages. Clerks were scarce, and their records of common things scarcer still. Chroniclers considered the masses as beneath the dignity of history, except during one of those periodical convulsions that imperilled the upper classes; and by this time, the voice of tradition sounds faint and uncertain. Fortunately, the corporation of London, as might have been expected of a body that has made their city the metropolis of the commercial world, have been in the habit of keeping their books regularly and carefully. They seem to have thought nothing too insignificant to find a place there; and wonderful to say, their records have been preserved till now, spared even by the fire in which old London and its associations were well nigh swept utterly away. Miraculously saved as they have been, some of them threatened to expire of sheer old age, when the corporation wisely resolved to rejuvenate the old Latin and Norman-French, and to introduce them to the present generation in modern costume. The result is, a series of vivid pictures of city life, ranging from 1276 to 1419, painted by unconscious artists of the time, with a Dutch-like fidelity of detail. Fraudulent shopkeepers and obscure members of the dangerous classes little deemed that their sentence to an hour of the pillory might secure them a questionable immortality to all time.

So early as the thirteenth century, London was one of the richest towns in Europe. Foreigners were continually flocking over to the city of promise, just as the Irish and Germans of our own century go to New York; but the immigrants to London brought skill or capital as their stock-in-trade; they were substantial and industrious

men, for the most part French or Flemings—artisans from the thriving Arras, Amiens, Ghent, Ypres, and Bruges, or Germans from the Hanseatic cities. Members of the great mercantile houses of Italy, already men of fortune, came to invest it at good interest or on sound security; they angled at once for whales and sprats; they combined the legitimate banking of which their own Lombard Street is still the head-quarters, with speculative financing business and that of our advertising West End money-lenders, who offer advances to gentlemen in public offices or in the army on their personal security. The well-known Florentine family of the Bardi give their name to a Society, a sort of mediæval financial limited liability company. Then we have the Society of Lucca; and we find a clergyman stealing the silver-plate of Sir Baroncin, one of the members; and a gentleman who lent Edward II., when Prince of Wales, a good deal of money on his reversion to the throne. Bucklersbury takes its name from the Buckerels, naturalised Italians who rose to fill the highest posts in the city. If only they were respectable and well to do, London made slight distinction between her native-born children and her adopted ones. Penned within her walls, her thriving population soon became hard put to it for elbow-room. In those days, when a man with anything to lose settled in the suburbs, he did it at his peril. The corporation were unremitting in their precautions for the security of their wealth. The city gates were carefully closed when the first chime of the curfew rang out from St Martin-le-Grand, and at the last stroke the smaller wickets were shut, and till daybreak the city was isolated. Each ward sent its quota of warders; and some twenty men, 'strong and well armed,' mounted guard at each of the gates. During the day, sergeants 'fluent of speech' were stationed there, with strict instructions to cross-examine all doubtful characters. At night, too, all the boats on the river were made fast to the Middlesex shore. Meanwhile, there were strict police regulations for the safety of the life and property in the slumbering city. While a couple of boatfuls of river-police were afloat on the Thames, strong parties of watchmen were patrolling the town. All the taverns and hostleries closed at the curfew, under penalty, we presume, of forfeiting their licence. After that hour, any belated citizen was picked up incontinent, and summarily disposed of in 'the Tun.' The Tun was a cage of circular form, and the prototype of the Round House, the frequent night-quarters of bloods and Mohocks of a later day, and immortalised to all time by Hogarth. As with us, police charges are most frequent after Christmas-eve and other high festivals of the people, so the eve of the nativity of St John the Baptist, and those of St Peter and St Paul, seem to have been the bugbears of the quieter citizens of the period. To meet these occasions, the authorities continually took exceptional measures—each alderman was warned by circular to call on 'the good men of his ward' to act as a sort of specials. As distinctive badges, they wore party-coloured coats over their armour, and carried lances painted in different colours. It would seem that the good men cared as little as Dogberry to make or meddle with improper characters, for as they were furnished with flaming cressets fixed on long poles, they must have been visible at any distance to enemies of the peace.

The police of the day had much the same

responsibilities on their shoulders as their successors. Then, as now, they were ever launching proclamations against those who obstructed the pavement by disposing of their wares or following their callings there. The fullers were prominent offenders, and ordinance after ordinance is levelled at the tailors and pelterers, who, 'to the prejudice of the great persons and good folk,' should be 'daring enough' to scour furs and cloths in the open air, except during night or at early morning. At the same time, if oppressed by a crush of orders from 'great lords,' they might retire in the daytime to by-lanes or blind-alleys. The awning nuisance, so prejudicial in the nineteenth century to the silk hats of those who exceed the common stature of mankind, had its counterpart in those days in the protruding wooden pent-houses, which are ordered to be removed, or raised to a certain height, as men-at-arms on tall war-chargers were always knocking their helmets against them. Some of the more remote streets must have been both indifferently kept and highly odiferous, judging by an uncompromising order that all pig-sties whatever are to be cleared away. Independent pigs foraging on their own account, seem to have been the nuisance of that day, as ownerless curs are with us. The Sir Richard Maynes of the time gave their myrmidons instructions to deal with them summarily, always excepting the swine of the blessed St Anthony, who, in virtue of their sacred character, had the run of the town. The corporation seem to have roused themselves periodically to energetic action in the matter of the purifying their city. Probably, when things got quite intolerable, they began to cure themselves. That every citizen should be his own scavenger, was their principle, and each man was bound to keep the space clean before his door, as with us after a storm, we are compelled to remove the fallen snow. They were far from consistent in their sanitary regulations. Now the citizens are commanded to shoot all their rubbish into the river; now they are forbidden to pollute the Thames in any way whatever, under the heaviest penalties. Already it had become occasionally offensive in summer to our not over-sensitive ancestors. But the Fleet ditch was the standing nuisance, and the unlucky captives in 'the mansion of our prison of Flete' suffered from 'grievous maladies which put them in no small peril, by reason of the abominable stench.' Pure water was scarce. The course of Wal-broke, coming from the open moor of Finsbury, received constant attention, and great precautions were taken against the waste of the water in the conduit in Chepe. It seems the brewers had taken to carrying pails of it away to their brew-houses. All they took would scarcely have gone far with Barclay or Truman, but we learn that at that time the value of a brewer's stock-in-trade might be counted by shillings.

The community seem generally to have lived very comfortably. We hear very little of poverty, nothing of poor-houses, no deaths by starvation. The great city markets were very much what they are now: the fishmongers had appropriated Billingsgate; the game and poultry sellers, Leadenhall; the butchers and corn-dealers, Newgate; but the people had to live half the year on salted meat and stock-fish, and vegetables we never hear of. The foreign birds that we have acclimated were scarce and rare; pheasants fetched, comparatively speaking, enormously high prices; swans, bitterns,

and herons were all expensive; you could get a dozen of capons for what you would have paid for a single pheasant. Butcher-meat was to be had for a trifle. Sturgeon seems to have been a popular fish, and very plentiful; and the salmon and trout, as they swarmed in the river, would have gladdened the heart of Mr Buckland. The fishermen of Greenwich, Woolwich, and Barking were being continually hauled over the coals for catching them with unlawful nets; one of these, that much resembled the trawl, seems to have been looked on with as much prejudice then as now.

The inspectors of weights and measures had no sinecure of it. The bakers were being continually convicted of defrauding their customers, sometimes of trying to deceive the authorities to boot. One man, with unfortunate presence of mind, thrust a piece of iron into a loaf that was about to be tested, and being unluckily found out, was made a signal example of. Very frequently, the sentence was a lenient one, and confined to a confiscation of the bread. Meat unfit for human food was constantly being exposed for sale; the invariable punishment for slow-poisoning of this sort was exposure in the pillory, among the asphyxiating fumes of the putrid carcasses as they were burned beneath it. One rather intricate case is reported, where a pieman was charged with vending a pie made of a couple of putrid capons. The defence was, that the plaintiffs had eaten one of them before objecting to the flavour; but a jury of cooks, to whom the questionable dish was submitted, found unanimously against the prisoner. He was marched off to the pillory incontinent, the remains of the loathsome paste slung to his neck. The *lex talionis* was applied in the case of a vintner selling sour wine, and they forced him to drink it. We find no reports of those magnificent banquets which in later times have gained a world-wide renown for the hospitality of the city. Instead of entertaining the court and the aristocracy in the halls of the guilds, it seems then to have been the practice to buy the materials for the feast in the east, and send them to be eaten in the west—perhaps a pleasanter arrangement for one of the parties, if not both. But that the mayor and aldermen were even then of a jovial turn, we gather not only from presumptive, but from direct evidence. When their names have been taken in vain, the fine imposed is not unfrequently remitted for a tun of wine; and an alderman who had been remiss in some of his civic duties, is fined immediately in a dinner for the mayor and his brethren; and he seems to have played the host with no *arrière-pensée*.

The worthy magistrates of the day had naturally a good deal of criminal business on their hands, but on the whole, the calendar seems to have been relatively lighter than now. There are a good many records of coroners' inquests, but with few exceptions, the verdicts are accidental death. One gentleman, to be sure, a vintner's servant, makes away with his master after a few days' service, and calmly takes his place behind the bar of the murdered man. But the circumstances appearing suspicious, the neighbours have them inquired into, and the discovery of the body is followed by confession and punishment. Theft and burglary are not very frequent, but we hear of a good many forged deeds; and thieves, forgers, and burglars are sent alike to the gallows. Considering the inducements held out to crime in a

city where sanctuaries were far more common than police-offices are now, it seems wonderful that property was not more tampered with than it appears to have been. Fancy the facilities it would offer to a rough of our times, if, after snatching a chain, he had only to make a rush with his booty for some church just round the corner.

There were professional bands of confederates, who made it their business to look out for young men from the country, and take them off into public-houses, where they prevailed on them to risk their money at games of chance and skill. We do not indeed hear of skittles, but one party, charged with cheating at 'quek' or chequer board, were seized with their table, when it was found that all the black squares were hollowed away, and that the dice which they had used were loaded. They had plucked their pigeon to his very cloak, but were compelled to disgorge. We have a pleasant story of Hugh de la Pole, who went abegging with a pitiful and most circumstantial tale of his having come over with fifteen wounded comrades from the storming of Ypres; that the Bishop of Norwich, who had carried the place, had found there three barrels of gold, over which he had come to a quarrel with the other English knights. In proof of all of which, Mr de la Pole exhibited his wounded limbs, swathed in bandages; but some hard-hearted sceptics insisted on removing these, when they found everything below sound and whole; whereupon the ingenious De la Pole was relegated to the pillory. John Warde and Richard Leynham were the prototypes of those dumb gentlemen who sketch mackerel on the pavement, and write 'I am starving' below. They were brought before the mayor, charged with carrying in their hands an ell measure, an iron hook and pincers, and a piece of leather, in shape like part of a tongue, edged with silver, and with writing round it to this effect: 'This is the tongue of John Warde.' On examination, it proved that if it were so, at least John Warde had a duplicate within his lips, and he was remanded to Newgate indefinitely. Our impulsive ancestors seem to have been rather given to contempt of court, an offence on which the important city magistrates were uniformly severe. Robert de Suttone, for example, was convicted and sentenced for insulting the sheriff-clerk by saying 'Iprhurt, Iprhurt'—early English for 'prut'—and raising his thumb at him, 'to his damnifying, and in manifest contempt of our Lord the king.'

The memorials give us but little clue to the state of the public health; but in spite of all the sanitary precautions we have alluded to, we find evidences of room for improvement in it. There are no references to plague, black-death, or any of the sweeping epidemics of the middle ages. Leprosy was the great bugbear of the times. As in the earliest ages, the appearance of the plague-blotch meant for the leper a lifelong isolation from his fellows. Whatever his standing, he was taken from his family, and thrust out of the city. Men on duty at the gates had standing orders to guard against the introduction of the disease, by examining any unhealthy-looking individual who might present himself for admission. It would appear from some proclamations on the subject, that the wretched outcasts had the same mania for wantonly communicating the disease, as was observed with many of the plague-stricken in the

Great Plague. Charity had founded lazaret-houses at Hackney and Southwark, to which, as far as possible, lepers were confined.

There seems to have been no parks or gardens, nothing done for the recreation of the working-classes. Space was valuable; and when they wanted fresh air, trees, and flowers, they had to look for them outside the walls; nor had they to go far a-field, when Finsbury Circus was a barren moor, and the village of Charing stood among its copses and meadows. We have an incidental notice of the nucleus of a zoological garden, or at least of a menagerie, when Edward III. makes proclamation about a certain beast of his 'from the land of Egypt, an owre.' It sets forth that the people, envying the keepers of the beast, had threatened to do them grievous bodily harm, and atrociously to kill the said beast itself, and it accordingly warns all and sundry that the king has taken the one and the other under his special protection. We know that the authorities of those days, lay and spiritual, encouraged May-poles and similar gaieties of a Sunday; but we find them setting their faces against desecrating the Sabbath by week-day work. There is a letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Council, where he draws their attention to the practice of the barbers shaving their customers on that day, and he fulminates horrible anathemas at those who should continue the practice; but he goes on to shew considerable knowledge of mankind, remarking that he is aware men are become so malicious as to be more nearly touched by a comparatively small pecuniary fine than by the most terrible of threatened spiritual penalties; he therefore conjures his dear children of the Council to see to it that they enact such fines as may at once insure a discontinuance of the practice.

On the whole, these memorials leave us with the impression that, in the case of London, there is not so much to be said against the 'good old times' as uncompromising innovators would persuade us. If the liberty of the subject was occasionally infringed, he seems to have led a not unpleasant life of it under restrictions to which he was accustomed. Certainly, we question whether, allowing for difference in population, there was not more happiness and less suffering in the old city than in the modern one.

EVENING.

Low in the pale cold sky the ashen clouds
Huddle for warmth together; as the night
Grows gradual o'er the landscape, and enshrouds
Dim valley depth and craggy mountain height.
Dogs bay from far farm-folds and farm-folds nigh;
The heifer, waiting by the pasture-gate,
With head upturned, lows at the darkening sky,
And then looks homeward. It is wearing late:
All home-life sounds now die across the leas;
And save the clamorous noise of roosting rooks,
The low, soft purr of grove-hid, pebbly brooks,
And softer sigh of wind in withered trees,
Is nothing heard, and but for which would be
Inviolate stillness and tranquillity.

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